

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 AGRE-00
AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01
TRSE-00 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-01 OES-06 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04
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TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, TS, LY

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN REACTION TO JALLOUDD'S CLAIM THAT
CONTINENTAL SHELF PROBLEM DOES NOT EXIST

REF: TRIPOLI 0355

1. SUMMARY: ALL TUNISIAN PAPERS OF MARCH 17 GAVE
PROMINENT COVERAGE TO REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO FORMER LIBYAN
PRIME MINISTER JALLOUDD, ACCORDING TO THWOM THERE IS NO
DISPUTE BETWEEN TUNISIA AND LIBYA OVER CONTINENTAL SHELF.
FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY OF STORY WHICH WAS FIRST REPORTED
ON TUNISIAN TV EVENING OF MARCH 16. TUNISIAN RESPONSE
HAS BEEN IMMEDIATE AND STRONG REJECTION OF JALLOUDD'S
CLAIMS. END SUMMARY.

2. JALLOUDD REPORTEDLY TOLD ARNA (LIBYAN PRESS AGENCY) ON MARCH
15 THAT "NO PROBLEM EXISTS BETWEEN LIBYA DN TUNISIA OVER
THE CONTINENTAL SHELF". JALLOUDD NOTED THAT TUNISIA
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WAS THE FIRST TO DELINEATE THE CONTINENTAL SHELF IN
1967, WHEN GOT GRANTED FRENCH FIRM, AQUITAINE, A PERMIT
FOR PETROLEUM EXPLORATION. IT WAS ON BASIS OF THIS
"DELINEATION MADE BY TUNISIA" THAT LIBYA GRANTED A
PERMIT TO SAME FIRM FOR OIL EXPLORATION (PRESUMABLY
ON OTHER SIDE OF TUNISIAN DEMARCATION LINE). THERE WAS
NO PROBLEM WITH THIS ARRANGEMENT ACCORDING TO JALLODD

UNTIL AQUITAINE'S STUDIES SHOWED "NO RESULTS" IN THE GULF OF GHG TDQXTUNISIAN SIDE) BUT DID CONFIRM EXISTENCE OF PETROLEUM DEPOSITS ON LIBYAN SIDE OF CONTINENTAL SHELF. IT WAS AT THIS POINT THAT TUNISIA BEGAN TO MAKE STATEMENTS ON SUBJECT. THESE STATEMENT WHICH "POSE A PROBLEM THAT DOES NOT EXIST" SURPRISED JALLOU" IN VIEW OF TUNISIA HERSELF HAVING HAD ALREADY DRAWN THE BOUNDARY IN 1967 AND IN VIEW OF CURRENT INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND OF NEW DIRECTIVES OF THE LOS CONFERENCE."

3. TUNISIAN REACTION WAS IMMEDIATE. IDENTICAL ARTICLES IN ALL PAPERS STATED TUNISIAN POLITICAL CIRCLES VIEWED JALLOU'S REMARKS "WITH ASTONISHMENT." PRESS STATEMENT CONTINUED THAT JALLOU'S AFFIRMATION "CAN ONLY WORSEN THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES, WHICH LARG NOW DENY EXIST." ARTICLE NOTED LARGE NUMBER OF MEETINGS, DISCUSSIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE SINCE 1968 AS PROOF OF EXISTENCE OF PROBLEM AND CITED AS FURTHER PROOF TUNISIAN-LIBYAN JOINT COMMUNIQUE PUBLISHED AUGUST 24, 1976. PAPERS NOTED TERMS OF THIS ACCORD; I.E., SUBMISSION OF DISPUTE TO ICJ AND COMMITMENT TO SEARCH FOR TRANSITORY FORMULA FOR EXPLOITATION OF SHELF PENDING ICJ DECISION AND CLAIMED THAT IT IS NOT TUNISIA'S FAULT THAT ACCORD HAS NOT BEEN PUT INTO EFFECT. ARTICLE REJECTED OUT OF HAND LIBYAN CLAIM THAT EXPLORATION CONCESSIONS GRANTED BY GOT IN 1967 CONSTITUTE "DEMARICATION OF A FRONTIER."

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4. SAME ARTICLE ALSO RECALLED THAT THE ZONE IN WHICH A "FOREIGN FIRM" HAS ILLEGALLY BEGUN DRILLING FOR LIBYAN GOVERNMENT, AND WHICH IS CLEARLY WITHIN TUNISIAN JURISDICTION, IS SITUATED WITHIN A CONCESSION GIVEN BY TUNISIA TO CONSORTIUM TO WHICH SAME "FOREIGN COMPANY" BELONGS. (THIS WAS CLEAR REFERENCE TO RECENT DISPUTE WITH AGIP OVER DRILLINGS IN DISPUTED AREA ON BEHALF OF LARG.)

5. ARTICLE AFFIRMED THAT PROBLEM CLEARLY EXISTS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES, NOTWITHSTANDING JALLOU'S CLAIM TO CONTRARY AND CLAIMED THAT TUNISIA STILL REPECTS TERMS OF 1976 JOINT COMMUNIQUE AND REMAINS READY TO ACCEPT AND APPLY DECISION OF ICJ. ARTICLE CLOSED WITH WISH THAT LIBYA WOULD HONOR AGREEMENT IN SAME MANNER.

6. COMMENT: BLUNT STATEMENT PRINTED IN RESPONSE TO JALLOU'S REMARKS IS APPRENTLY AUTHORITATIVE AND REPRESENTS GOT'S TOTAL REJECTION OF IBYA'S NEW POSITION. THIS IS FIRST TIME EMBASSY HAS HEARD OF LIBYAN CLAIM THAT A

CONCESSION GRANTED BY GOT TO AQUITAINE IN 1967 SERVED TO
DEMARCATÉ CONTINENTAL SHELF, AND IT IS NOT SURPRISING
GOTLSHOULD REJECT THIS NEW LIBYAN CONTENTION OUT OF HAND.
FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE IN TUNIS, WE ARE UNABLE TO JUDGE
HOW SERIOUSLY AND IN WHAT CONTECT JALLOUD'S REMARKS WERE
MADE, BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT A POTENTIALLY SERIOUS PROBLEM
DOES EXIST AND THAT LAST YEAR'S AUGUST AGREEMENT IS NOW
PRETTY MUCH A DEAD ISSUE.
MULCAHY

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Message Attributes

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